UNICEF's Report on Child and Bonded Labour

1590. DR. MOHAN BABU:
SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY:
SHRI MOHINDER SINGH KALYAN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of children forced to labour in hazardous units and number of bonded labourers in the country as per UNICEF's annual report entitled "state of the world's children";

(b) the steps taken for elimination of child labour rising in the country, particularly in urban areas; and

(c) the stringent anti-child labour laws proposed to be introduced to tackle the problem of child labour?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) According to the latest report of UNICEF titled "Status of the World's Children-1997" there are about 250 million working children in the world. Half of these children can be found in Asia alone. While no specific mention has been made in the Report about the total number of working children in India, it has been indicated that about 50,000 children are working in glass bangle industry in Firozabad. The Report also refers to the prevalence of bonded child labour in India in agriculture, carpet, match-making, cigarette-rolling, plate and silk industry.

(b) and (c) Government is committed to the goal of eradication of child labour in all its forms. However, in the first instance the rehabilitation of child labour in hazardous occupations has been taken. The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, is currently in operation under which the employment of children is prohibited in seven occupations and eighteen processes contained in parts A and B of the schedule to the Act.

Employers employing children in the prohibited occupations and processes are liable to be prosecuted under the Act. There are also provisions in various other labour laws safeguarding the interest of working children. Apart from legal measures, government have taken steps for withdrawal and rehabilitation of working children in hazardous occupations. 76 child labour projects have been set up for rehabilitation of around 1.5 lakh children working in hazardous occupations. These child labour projects are located in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. As per the available information, around 1.05 lakh children are already enrolled in the special schools.

Outcome of the Seminar on Child Labour by V.V. Giri National Labour Institute

1591. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Seminar on child labour was organised by V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA recently;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held in the seminar and outcome thereof;

(c) whether Government have formulated plans and programmes to combat child labour in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) A Seminar on child labour was Organised by the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, Noida, on 27th January, 1997. It was attended by the chairpersons and Project Directors of the National Child Labour Projects, NGOs, trade unions, employers' organisations and the representatives of ILO and UNICEF. The important recommendations made in the seminar included, inter alia, health